

Message Text

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TO USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE

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AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MANILA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY RANGOON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 184805

FOR J. M. WILSON, JR. FROM CARLIN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, VS

SUBJECT: INDOCHINESE REFUGEES - BOAT CASES.

REFS: (A) STATE 183403, (B) HONG KONG 8690, (C) SINGAPORE
3565, (D) MANILA 10894, (E) GENEVA 5673

1. REFTELS AND PREVIOUS TRAFFIC ON THIS SUBJECT FROM THESE
AND OTHER POSTS POINT UP THE FACT THAT WE ARE AT AN IMPORTANT
STAGE IN THE FORMULATION OF INTERNATIONAL POLICY ON THE
TREATMENT OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES WHO WILL BE LEAVING THEIR
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HOME COUNTRY BY BOAT IN THE FUTURE. A WRONG PRECEDENT AT

THIS TIME COULD HAVE DISASTROUS EFFECTS. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE CURRENT WILLINGNESS OF JAPANESE TO ACCEPT BOAT CASES TEMPORARILY UNDER UNHCR AUSPICES WHILE RESETTLEMENT OPPORTUNITIES ARE SOUGHT IS ENCOURAGING. ALSO, IT APPEARS SEVERAL SEA GOVERNMENTS ARE WATCHING AVA CASE WITH INTEREST AND IT CAN BE HOPED THAT A FAVORABLE OUTCOME IN THAT CASE MIGHT HELP TO MOVE THESE GOVERNMENTS IN THE DIRECTION OF A MORE FORTHCOMING POLICY.

2. THUS, IT SEEMS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO US THAT THE UNHCR MOVE FORWARD PROMPTLY WITH THE NEW APPEAL ON THE SUBJECT OF BOAT CASES REPORTED (REF E) AS EXPECTED TO BE ISSUED JULY 16. WHILE UNHCR HAS BEEN QUITE VIGOROUS IN ITS

DEMARCHES ON THE AVA CASE, IT APPEARS THAT SUCH REPRESENTATIONS HAVE BEEN LIMITED ON THIS AND ON SIMILAR CASES TO THE GOVERNMENTS IMMEDIATELY CONCERNED. WE BELIEVE NOW THE UNHCR MUST BROADEN HIS APPROACH IN ORDER TO ACT AS A CATALYST IN DEVELOPING A REGION-WIDE ACCEPTANCE OF THE HUMANITARIAN IMPERATIVES PRESENTED BY THESE BOAT CASES AS WELL AS TAKING A WORLD WIDE APPROACH IN SEEKING RESETTLEMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUCH REFUGEES. FURTHER, WE BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT THAT HE DO THIS PROMPTLY AND PUBLICLY.

3. IN DISCUSSING THIS MATTER WITH HCR SADRUDDIN AGA KHAN, YOU MAY ALSO WISH TO SUGGEST THAT HE MAKE A PERSONAL VISIT TO THE GOVERNMENTS IN THE AREA CONCERNED, IN ORDER TO LEND HIS PRESTIGE TO THE EFFORT TO WIN GENERAL ACCEPTANCE OF SUCH POLICY. ALTERNATIVELY, HE MIGHT SEND A HIGH LEVEL EMISSARY, PREFERABLY NOT AN AMERICAN.

4. WE NOTE THAT THE UNHCR HAS GIVEN THE HONG KONG GOVERNMENT ASSURANCES OF CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF TH REFUGEES IN THE AVA CASE WHILE AWAITING RESETTLEMENT AND THAT THE UNHCR REPRESENTATIVE IN MANILA HAS MADE SIMILAR ASSURANCES TO GOP ON BOAT CASES ARRIVED IN THE PHILIPPINES TO DATE. YOU MIGHT WISH TO EXPLORE WITH UNHCR WHETHER THIS IS A BLANKET POLICY EXTENDING THROUGHOUT THE AREA. IF, AS SEEMS LIKELY, SUBJECT OF US SUPPORT IN MEETING SUCH EXPENSES SHOULD ARISE, YOU MIGHT WISH TO AGREE TO EXPLORE POSSI-
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BILITY OF A US CONTRIBUTION TO SUCH AN EFFORT. KISSINGER

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